Health hazards in asbestos mining

*200.DR. PRABHA THAKUR:

SHRI KRISHANLAL BALMIKI:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Bureau of Mines has conducted a study on the effect on the health of labourers engaged in asbestos mining;

(b) if so, whether this study has made any suggestions;

(c) whether the study group has suggested doing away with the restrictions on asbestos mining;

(d) whether Government proposes to implement them;

(e) whether Government would lift the ban on new leases for asbestos mining and their renewal; and

(f) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Study recommended imposition of safeguards on pollution level in work environment and other remedial measures subject to which the ban imposed on grant and renewal of mining leases and expansion of mining may be lifted.

(d) to (f) Recommendations of the Study have been examined in consultation with all stake holders. Some stake holders have suggested that asbestos mining can be permitted with appropriate safeguards. At present the ban on mining of asbestos has not been lifted.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Private investment in food processing

1395.SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has taken initiative to attract private investment, including Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), to strengthen cold chain infrastructure in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the names of private investors and foreign companies that have shown their interest in investment;

(d) the States where Government plans to spend their money; and

(e) the chunk out of the investment Government is considering to spend in Himachal Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (c) In order to strengthen the cold chain infrastructure in the country, one of the thrust areas for discussions with various private / foreign investors has been on the possibilities of development of cold chain infrastructure in the country by attracting private investment including Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Although MFPI has not received any proposal from foreign companies for investment in development of cold chain infrastructure so far, Ministry has received several proposals from private investors for setting up of cold chain facilities in the country.

(d) and (e) To encourage setting up of cold chain facilities and backward linkages in the country, Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI) has a Plan Scheme for Cold Chain, Value Addition and Preservation Infrastructure during the 11th Plan to provide financial assistance to project proposals received from public / private organizations for cold chain infrastructure development. The

scheme envisages financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid @ 50% of the total cost of plant and machinery and technical civil works in general areas and 75% for North Eastern Region and difficult areas subject to a maximum of Rs.10.00 crore. The initiatives are aimed at filling the gaps in the supply chain, strengthening of cold chain infrastructure, establishing value addition with infrastructural facilities like sorting, grading, packaging and processing for horticulture including organic produce, marine, dairy, poultry, etc.

MFPI Plan Scheme for Cold Chain, Value Addition and Preservation Infrastructure is not State specific. The complete proposals, as per guidelines of Scheme, received from Public / Private Sector organisations or non-Government Bodies including State Governments for setting up of Cold Chain, Value Addition and Preservation Infrastructure are examined and considered for approval of financial assistance.

Setting up of food parks

1396.SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 60 food parks were approved during the Tenth Five Year Plan period;

(b) whether it is also a fact that only 29 of them have become operational;

(c) if so, the details of food parks that became operational, State-wise;

(d) the details of objectives or targets set for above food parks, State-wise;

(e) whether the objectives or targets have not been achieved so far; and

(f) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (f) The Scheme of setting up of Food Parks was in operation from 8th Five Year Plan onwards. Government has approved a total number of 56 Food Parks during 8th, 9th & 10th Five Year Plan Periods. Out of the above, 35 Food Parks are operational and the remaining are under various stages of progress. Details of all the Food Parks are given in the Statement (*See* below). The Scheme of Food Parks was project oriented and financial assistance was extended for creation of common facilities such as power supply, water supply, cold storage, warehousing facilities, effluent treatment plant, food testing analytical laboratories, common processing facilities etc. The objective of Food Park Scheme was to provide common infrastructural facilities for use by food processing industries including small and medium enterprises to enhance value addition. Most of the Food Parks have been promoted by State Government agencies and they have been conceptualized in the traditional industrial estate mode with no forward and backward linkages. The evaluation studies of the Scheme, undertaken by the Ministry, identified the major reasons for the inadequate functioning of parks as: poor site selection, delay in providing basic infrastructure facilities like power, water, road etc., absence of strong backward linkages and market linkages and poor management / implementation capabilities. The study observed that production area has remained underdeveloped and not integrated with the requirements of the market. There was no assurance of steady supply of raw materials and the benefits of value addition rarely percolated to the farming community. The study further suggested that the Food Park will be successful only if complete range of infrastructure from farm level onwards is supported. Project Managements capabilities need to be upgraded and the supply chain investment clearly identified. Recommendations also included higher scales of assistance for building infrastructure.

The Government have recently approved a new and restructured Scheme of Mega Food Park where all the above bottlenecks have been addressed. The New Scheme envisages integrated value chain with strong basement and forward linkages alongwith higher level of financial assistance.